ABOUT GROWTH

Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development

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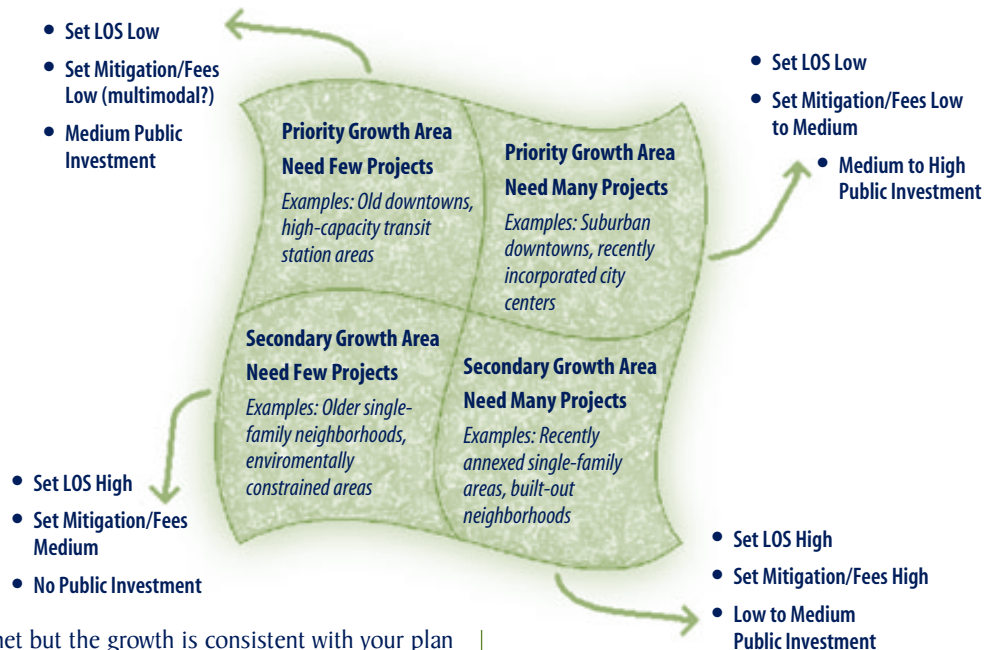
By Ivan Miller
Senior Planner, Puget Sound Regional Council

It's more than splitting hairs when a jurisdiction decides that concurrency should be tailored to focus growth into areas where capacity exists rather than to create new capacity to serve new development. That growth be encouraged first where adequate capacity already exists becomes a seminal point in practice because sufficient funds are rarely available to provide capacity exactly when and where a new development needs it.

The legislative requirement is open-ended: allow growth where your standard can be met – but change the standard when it cannot be

An inventory of concurrency programs conducted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) in 2001 found that more than half included some form of tailoring (see page 6). The diversity of tailoring strategies was impressive: commercial versus residential areas, urban centers, facilities carrying traffic to state routes, streets at the city border, transit compatible streets, and streets where no alternate route exists.

The list implies potential for innovation, but also a lot of confusion. Is it worth figuring out? Definitely. Here's a simplistic attempt to help explain concurrency.

- Set LOS Low
- Set Mitigation/Fees Low (multimodal?)
- Medium Public Investment

**Priority Growth Area
Need Few Projects**
Examples: Old downtowns, high-capacity transit station areas

**Priority Growth Area
Need Many Projects**
Examples: Suburban downtowns, recently incorporated city centers

- Set LOS Low
- Set Mitigation/Fees Low to Medium
- Medium to High Public Investment

**Secondary Growth Area
Need Few Projects**
Examples: Older single-family neighborhoods, enviromentally constrained areas

**Secondary Growth Area
Need Many Projects**
Examples: Recently annexed single-family areas, built-out neighborhoods

- Set LOS High
- Set Mitigation/Fees Medium
- No Public Investment

- Set LOS High
- Set Mitigation/Fees High
- Low to Medium Public Investment

met but the growth is consistent with your plan – or, build the facilities needed to maintain the standard. Unfortunately, in a densely populated and complicatedly governed region such as the Central Puget Sound, control is quickly lost because funds are insufficient, and your neighbors' traffic can overwhelm whatever facilities you build.

Is the only option an ever-declining standard, with new facilities only slowing the rate of decline? The short answer probably is "yes, but…" Another solution is tailoring your program.

Focusing growth

Jurisdictions are typically made up of many districts and neighborhoods; each demonstrating different desires and needs. In my hypothetical city, as shown in the diagram, there are four distinct districts. The comprehensive plan sets different goals for each (some areas are prioritized for growth, others not) and each has different needs (some have significant transportation deficiencies, others not).

Communities use many approaches to link transportation, land use plans

By Leonard Bauer
Managing Director, Growth Management Services

Since the appearance of the automobile in the United States, one of the most difficult planning challenges has been providing safe and convenient access to places people want to go, whether they are traveling by horse or car, on foot or skateboard.

The difficulty of this task is reflected in the occasional and (mostly) friendly disagreements between land use planners and traffic engineers as they work together to plan for their communities' land use and transportation futures.

The Growth Management Act (GMA) introduced additional complexity in its requirement that land use and transportation planning need to be integrated. It requires:

- Consistency between Land Use and Transportation elements of a community's comprehensive plan.
- Coordination of each community's comprehensive plan with those of adjacent communities.
- Consistency of each community's Transportation Element with a regional transportation plan.
- A concurrency review to ensure that new development can occur only where adequate facilities are or will soon be available.

Most Washington jurisdictions have met the challenge of integrating land use and transportation in today's difficult political and financial climate. Many creative approaches are underway around the state. This issue of *About Growth* highlights a number of these efforts in the areas of transit-oriented development, concurrency, transportation funding, and community health issues. These examples provide practical help and ideas for local governments addressing these issues.

Growth Management Services is working closely with the authors of the concurrency studies featured on page 3 to identify how the study recommendations can best be implemented.

If we can be of additional help regarding transportation and land use planning issues, please contact us at 360-725-3000.

The Wenatchee Valley is linking transportation and land use with the Apple Capital Loop Trail (above) and the Chelan-Douglas Intermodal Center.

CTED/Rita R. Robison

How concurrency works in the Spokane Metropolitan Region

By Ed Hayes

Senior Transportation Planner, Spokane Regional Transportation Council

Concurrency is more than a tool that guides development in accordance with comprehensive plans. Concurrency may also serve other functions, especially where transportation impacts need measurement such as with air quality and congestion management. These types of programs dovetail into concurrency systems and create secondary benefits that make outcomes positive.

It's complex

Instead of dreading the process of integrating concurrency requirements into the planning processes for the Spokane region, local officials and staff acted to realize the opportunities. The Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) in collaboration with its partner agencies developed a concurrency management system that has a nexus with air quality, congestion management system planning, and the metropolitan transportation plan. The creation of such a program is not easy. Crafting a concurrency system has taken more than five years of hard work, beginning with the adoption of a guidance document that outlined the two-tier system used in Spokane.

SRTC maintains the regional, first tier system that utilizes travel time on regional corridors as its level of service. Regional travel time thresholds are created with citizen and technical input and are adopted by the SRTC board of directors.

The multiple-tier structure allows local jurisdictions to develop their own concurrency ordinances for the second tier. Local concurrency regulations must be as least as stringent as the regional concurrency system. This ensures conformance with regional air quality standards and federal congestion management requirements, while allowing jurisdictions maximum flexibility in developing their own level of service criteria and measurement techniques.

It's dynamic

SRTC evaluates the concurrency system on an annual basis. This analysis is coordinated with the schedule for comprehensive plan amendments. As community needs evolve we expect the process to carry out concurrency to change in the Spokane region. The incorporation of new jurisdictions such as the City of Spokane Valley, emerging case law, new development, and new local concurrency ordinances create pressure that challenge local and regional governments to devise new strategies to improve the concurrency management system for the Spokane region.

An emerging problem is interjurisdictional impacts where neighboring concurrency ordinances are in conflict with one another. Often this stems from level of service thresholds that are not well aligned among adjacent jurisdictions. Other issues are how to interpret legislative direction. For instance, the definition of reasonable assurance of funding and assumptions that involve capacity.

SRTC has been asked to facilitate a forum where these concerns are discussed among stakeholders and ideas are generated to solve these complex problems.

Tailored approaches to concurrency

Knowing these differences, and defining districts carefully, the city has tailored its concurrency program, mitigation requirements, impact fee structure, and public investment strategy appropriately.

Incentives and disincentives are now changed, hopefully putting the city and the developer on the same page. For priority growth districts, the jurisdiction "sets the table" by making investments, sets a service level that allows for growth and, while they don't completely get rid of mitigation, they do lower fees. For secondary growth districts development costs are higher and public investments lower. The tailored program means that developing in these districts costs more, but the developers know this and can choose to go in anyway.

All's well that ends well

This tailored approach uses incentives and disincentives properly, creates clarity and, hopefully, certainty. Aligning these complex factors – investments, service levels, and mitigation – helps ensure that the program delivers and implements your comprehensive plan.

Transportation planning and preservation

By Greg Griffith

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Expanding or modifying transportation infrastructure impacts historic and cultural resources, sometimes resulting in destruction of the resource.

During the Interstate highway system's creation, hundreds of historic resources were obliterated. That led to passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, creating the National Register of Historic Places and consultation process, which requires federal agencies to consider effects of their actions on significant historic properties.

Transportation improvement can affect historic and cultural resources in two ways. First, preservation concerns arise when transportation projects affect the historic characteristics of adjacent properties. Second, concerns arise when transportation facilities (such as bridges, depots, and roadways) have historic value.

Transportation project planning needs to address protection of historic and cultural resources as early as possible. A dialogue with the state historic preservation officer (SHPO), local preservation agencies, tribal governments, and the public is needed. Overlooking these steps may result in expensive project delays.

A good example of transportation planning is the City of Spokane's project to reconstruct the Monroe Street Bridge. Listed in the National Register and designed by Kirtland Cutter, the graceful arches of the bridge overlook Spokane Falls, itself culturally important to the Spokane Tribe. The city involved all preservation players early on, including the SHPO, Spokane Landmarks Commission, and tribes.

Agreement was reached to deconstruct the bridge down to its spanning arches and struts. The historic road deck, approaches, pedestrian pavilions, and sculptural elements would be lost. To compensate, the city agreed to reconstruct architectural elements according to Cutter's plans, install appropriate period light standards, and develop a public outreach effort featuring the historic and cultural significance of the Monroe Street crossing and Spokane Falls.

Building compact development near transit stations

By Ned Conroy
Principal Planner,
Puget Sound Regional Council

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is being promoted throughout the nation as a way to manage growth and increase transit use. The concept is to focus a compact mix of land use activities near a transit station – rail, bus, or ferry – so that residents, workers, and shoppers find it more convenient to walk or ride transit than drive their car for some of their trips.

The Central Puget Sound region has an excellent opportunity to promote the TOD concept as major investments are made in Sound Transit commuter rail and light rail stations, Washington State Department of Transportation ferry terminal expansions, and local transit agency bus transit centers. By 2030, more than 100 major regional transit stations will exist in the region if current plans are realized. Many stations will provide transit-oriented development opportunities.

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is promoting TOD through its Transit Station Communities Project. The project was made possible through funding by a Federal Highway Administration grant that is part of the broader smart growth initiative at the federal level. It has two primary objectives: (1) to increase awareness of the opportunities for TOD and (2) to work directly with local governments to develop strategies that will help make TOD happen.

Creating TOD is not always easy. The recipe for success includes a combination of good transit station design, effective community partnerships, strong market conditions, creative land use planning, and the right mix of incentives to overcome resistance from developers, communities, and local governments. A PSRC workbook called *Creating Transit Station Communities* describes strategies for implementing TOD projects, including changing land use regulations, creating development incentives, and establishing creative financing options. It is available from PSRC at 206-464-7532.

Contact Ned Conroy at 206-587-5670 if you have questions about TOD.

Pedestrian-oriented downtown features compact development, new transit center

By Alex Pietsch
Administrator, Renton Department of Economic Development

Transit-oriented development is an important part of Renton's downtown revitalization. CTED/RITA R. ROBISON

Renton is undertaking an aggressive downtown revitalization strategy. The city purchased five acres in its central downtown that were mainly occupied by auto dealerships, established a new auto mall fronting I-405 for the dealerships, and formulated a vision for the downtown core. The goal is to create a pedestrian-oriented area with regional transportation connections and a mix of residential, office, retail, and entertainment opportunities within walking distance.

With a streamlined permitting process, public-private partnerships, and significant infrastructure improvements, the results have been rewarding. Renton has a new downtown, with over $50 million of new money invested.

Don Dally, president of Dally Homes, built Metropolitan Place on the former site of the Good Chevrolet dealership. This transit-oriented development (TOD) includes 90 apartments, with about 3,500 square feet of retail space and a parking garage, across from the $3.8 million Transit Center that opened in the fall of 2001. An agreement between Dally and Metro provides every resident in the development free bus passes for the first two years. In turn, the county leased stalls from Dally under a 30-year lease for park-and-ride use.

This TOD is garnering significant regional attention. King County Executive Ron Sims' Smart Growth Initiatives, which includes TODs to help simulate the economy while protecting rural areas, are aimed at limiting sprawl and creating vibrant urban centers where people can live, work, and get around without relying on single-occupancy vehicles. "Projects like this are at the core of the county's comprehensive plan," said Elaine Kraft, King County spokeswoman.

Dally also built the $10 million Renton Renaissance, a mixed-use, residential complex, which opened in January 2000. With 100 apartments, it was the first of three new market-rate, modern apartment communities by Dally. Next came Burnett Station, at 339 Burnett Street, also a mixed-use complex with 58 apartments.

The Transit Center was a joint project by King County Metro Transit ($2 million), the City of Renton ($1.8 million), and local, state, and federal grants. It includes 7,500 square feet of Craftsman-style, covered passenger areas.

In addition to Dally's three developments and the Transit Center, other new amenities downtown include:

- The Piazza, a small park on the north side of Third Avenue between Burnett and Logan avenues. Built for $1.1 million, it contains a thematic stream representing the lost Black River. The park's urban furniture and streetlights also reflect the area's Craftsman theme.

- The new Renton Municipal Parking Garage, north of the Transit Center. At $9 million, the seven-story garage has six stories of parking with 563 stalls for short- and long-term parking and 2,400 square feet of retail space on the ground floor.

- The IKEA Performing Arts Center, northwest of the new parking garage, was built for $4.5 million. This new 550-seat facility took advantage of a scheduled remodel at Renton High School and was developed through a unique partnership with the community, the city, and the Renton School District.

- The Pavilion between the Transit Center and the Piazza will cost $2.6 million for design, renovation, and construction improvements. Once completed, the 10,000 square-foot, bow-truss building will be a central focal point in the downtown providing space for retail and/or civic activities.

Renton's redevelopment has been successful. In 2000 the city received a Puget Sound Regional Council 2020 Vision Award for its urban center downtown revitalization program and again in 2000 for Metropolitan Place.

Affordable housing, transit center link

By Rhonda Rosenberg
Director of Communications,
King County Housing Authority

The Village at Overlake Station offers an innovative solution to the interrelated problems of high housing costs, concrete sprawl, and congested roadways.

The first transit-oriented development (TOD) of its kind in the United States, this project is affordable housing with an on-site day-care center built over a bus transit center and park-and-ride lot. This pioneering project is the result of a novel public-private collaboration that included the King County Housing Authority (KCHA), King County, the City of Redmond, and private developers and investors.

"This is an important model," said KCHA Executive Director Stephen Norman. "Partnering private capital with public resources allowed us to create a new approach that appropriately accommodates this region's growth."

Completed in March 2002 and fully occupied by October 2002, the Village is made up of 308 apartment units in three buildings designed around a landscaped courtyard. Thirty units are barrier-free for disabled tenants and some units offer area and lake views. Hopelink, a nonprofit human services agency, manages the child day-care facility for about 53 infants and preschoolers. The two-level garage holds 538 cars with 150 stalls reserved for commuters.

Located in the heart of the Puget Sound's high-tech corridor, the project is adjacent to a large hospital and the Overlake business and shopping district. Microsoft is a stone's throw away, while Sears, Safeway, and other major retailers are within walking distance. It's an area with growing job opportunities, yet lacking in affordable housing.

The Village was designed to meet the housing needs of those in entry-level jobs, from clerks to schoolteachers, whose annual incomes fall below 60 percent of the area's median income of $77,900. Rents range from $680 per month for a studio apartment to $1,005 for a three-bedroom unit for income-qualified tenants.

The Village at Overlake Station is popular with residents and has helped Redmond meet its growth management objectives. The project has exceeded expectations in the reduction in use of single-occupancy vehicles. Planners anticipated 1.1 cars/use/unit, but only six in 10 households at the Village have a car (.6 cars/use/unit).

The Village also promotes alternative modes of transportation. Residents have access to an excellent bus system on their doorstep and receive free annual bus passes for two years. Flex Cars, an area car-sharing program, has stalls on site, too.

Funding for the $44.5 million project came from a variety of sources, including $23.5 million in tax-exempt private activity bonds issued by KCHA and underwritten by the Bank of America, as well as approximately $14.5 million in tax credit equity raised through the limited partner Columbia Housing Corporation and investor-limited partner Fannie Mae. The deferral of the developer fee loan provided $1.28 million for the project.

In addition, low-interest subordinate loans were provided by the King County Department of Transportation, ($1.65 million); the Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development ($1.5 million); and the King County housing finance program ($500,000). The City of Redmond waived about $1.7 million in development fees.

Affordable housing plus a day-care center, transit center, and park-and-ride are part of the Village at Overlake Station.
Courtesy of KCHA

Let's put health back into planning

By Karen Wolf, AICP
Senior Policy Analyst, King County Department of Development and Environmental Services

Urban sprawl may be hazardous to your health, a new King County study is discovering. The way we build our communities may be a cause of the rapidly rising obesity rates in the county. County residents need to increase their level of physical activity – and the best way to do that is to make physical activity part of everyone's daily routine.

"Walking connects us to our communities in a way that driving does not," said Ron Sims, King County executive. "I want this to be King County's legacy. As policy makers and planners, we have a duty to create a healthier society."

The percentage of King County residents who are overweight or obese has risen rapidly over the last 15 years. Obesity increases the risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Why are overweight and obesity cases increasing? There are several causes – including bigger Big Macs and Whoppers at fast-food restaurants – but a more important factor is that people are spending less time being physically active.

King County currently is leading an effort to make livability and health higher priorities in land use decisions and transportation investments. An advisory committee of health professionals, architects, bankers, transportation experts, community organizers, and air quality specialists is identifying strategies that will promote walking, bicycling, and transit use and discourage auto use.

"These committee meetings serve as a great forum for bringing multiple disciplines together and for sharing information about the work we do," said Burk Ketcham, committee member from the Washington Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity and Health.

Lawrence Frank, PhD, a national planning and transportation leader, is heading up the research effort and will develop recommendations for implementation.

As a regional service provider, King County can uniquely address health issues associated with urban planning. The county:
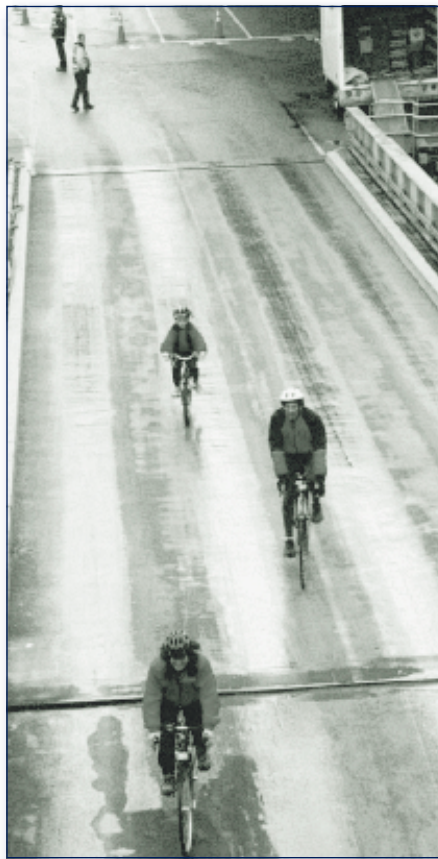
Bicycling is one healthy form of transportation that King County is promoting.
CTED/RITA R. ROBISON

- Operates a major transit agency and is responsible for a variety of transportation improvements.
- Co-manages a public health agency and governs land use in the unincorporated area.
- Is working with the state of Washington and the Puget Sound Regional Council to identify solutions – including transportation-efficient land use planning – to enhance the quality of life and mobility throughout the region.

As planners, we often forget that zoning and land use planning have origins in public health. During the 1900s, tenements were made more livable by limiting the number of stories and by banning laundries and bakeries from basements to reduce fire hazards. After World War II, suburbs were created as a respite from urban intensity. Now, we're learning we need to bring some of these uses back together again.

Planners need to look to public health professionals for their perspective on how to create healthier communities. Ultimately, we must consider public health when making all land use and transportation decisions. Pertinent health concerns should be incorporated into our policies and regulations in our next round of GMA updates.

A regional look at concurrency

By Ivan Miller
Senior Planner, Puget Sound Regional Council

Since September 2001, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) has studied how local governments in the region are meeting the Growth Management Act (GMA) concurrency requirement. The council inventoried local programs, held focus groups, and sponsored a workshop.

PSRC has discovered that every jurisdiction has a unique approach – from screenlines, to travel times, to travel distances, to area-wide averaging – and uses concurrency for slightly different purposes.

Congestion (automotive capacity) is what most programs measure, with alternative modes usually not recognized or promoted. Collaboration among communities occurs infrequently, meaning that impacts cross jurisdiction borders, but mitigation funds do not.

PSRC also found that only a small number of concurrency programs have had an affect on development, although a few jurisdictions are nearing the point of potentially denying development.

However, many jurisdictions are finding innovative ways to make their programs work. One jurisdiction sets different standards for rush hour versus non-rush hour so that pass-through traffic (which they don't control) doesn't control their decisions. Others are lowering fees and standards to focus growth in their centers, and many are using exemptions to support those uses important to them.

PSRC will develop recommendations that will be brought to its policy boards for discussion in the summer of 2003.

For details, see PSRC's concurrency report at *www.psrc.org/projects/growth/concur/concurrency.htm.*

2003 growth management legislation

By Growth Management Services' Staff

Changes to annexation, shoreline, watershed management, and rural economic development laws are among the growth management related laws passed by the Washington State Legislature and signed by the Governor. A summary of some of the new laws is provided below:

Annexation

SSB 5409 reviews the direct petition method of annexation in relation to a recent Washington State Supreme Court decision. To annex contiguous inhabited territory, a petition must be signed by: (1) owners of a majority of the acreage in the area to be annexed and (2) a majority of registered voters in the area to be annexed. To annex contiguous uninhabited territory, a petition must be signed by owners of a majority of the acreage in the area to be annexed. If property is owned by multiple owners, the signature of an owner designated by the multiple owners is sufficient for the petition.

The law states the direct petition method remains an alternative method and does not supersede any other method of annexation.

SHB 1755 creates alternative means for annexation of unincorporated islands of territory for GMA Buildable Lands Program jurisdictions. Interlocal agreements can be developed to annex qualifying territory meeting specific contiguity requirements and to conduct annexation elections for qualifying territory contiguous to more than one city or town.

Shoreline and growth management integration

SHB 1933 states that the integration of the goals and policies of the Shoreline Management Act (SMA) into GMA does not create an order of priority among GMA planning goals. The law:

• The goals of the GMA, including the goals and policies of the SMA set forth, continue to be listed without priority.
• Shorelines of statewide significance may include critical areas as designated by the GMA, but shorelines of statewide significance are not critical areas simply because they are shorelines of statewide significance.
• Within shoreline jurisdiction, critical areas will be protected by the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) and regulations will be reviewed for compliance with the SMA. However, SMP regulations must provide a level of protection of critical areas at least equal to that provided by the county or city's adopted or thereafter amended critical areas ordinances.

Shoreline management

SSB 6012 establishes a staggered schedule, from 2005 to 2014 and every seven years after the initial deadline, for the development, amendment, and review of local shoreline master programs.

• State funding must be provided to local governments at least two years prior to the deadline. Local governments that do not receive state funding may postpone the deadline until the following biennium. They must be given first priority for funding, and the deadline for their update will be two years after receiving the funds. With the exception of counties and cities scheduled to complete their updates in either 2005 or 2009, updates must be completed within two years after the Department of Ecology (Ecology) approves the grant.

• Local governments must develop or amend their shoreline master programs by December 1, 2014, at the latest to comply with the new Ecology guidelines, regardless of available state funding. Local governments may update their master programs earlier than the timelines provided and are eligible for grants, if funding is available.

Watershed management

ESB 5073 provides statutory and fiscal authority so that local entities offering water-related services can more fully cooperate and coordinate efforts as watershed plans are adopted and implemented. In addition to cities and counties, special purpose districts are authorized to expend water-related revenues, raise water-related funds, and participate in cooperative watershed management activities.

Public agencies may form separate legal entities, called watershed management partnerships, under the Interlocal Cooperation Act (Chapter 39.34 RCW).

Rural development

SSB 5786 clarifies that industrial uses within specified "limited areas of more intensive rural development" are not required to be principally designed to serve the existing and projected rural population in order to be lawfully zoned.

Environmental review

SHB 1707 allows GMA jurisdictions to establish additional categorical exemptions under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) within urban growth areas to accommodate infill development consistent with comprehensive plans. These exemptions apply only to GMA jurisdiction actions on residential or mixed-use development proposed where current density is lower than provided in the plan, if the comprehensive plan was previously analyzed through an environmental impact statement under SEPA.

Growth management hearings boards

SB 5507 adds an additional requirement for "participation standing" – a board can consider only issues "reasonably related" to issues that the aggrieved person previously raised at the local level.

Residential day-care facilities

HB 1170 limits restrictions on residential day-care facilities. A county cannot zone against or otherwise prohibit the use of a residential dwelling as a family day-care facility in a residential or commercial zone. The county can require the family day-care facility to comply with safety and licensing regulations and zoning conditions that are imposed on other dwellings in the same zone.

Secure community transition facilities

SSB 5550 prohibits secure community transition facilities from being sited near public and private youth camps.

Industrial projects

SSB 5761 modifies requirements for industrial projects of statewide significance so projects with projected employment positions of 50 or greater in rural counties or 100 or greater in urban counties are eligible.

Construction aggregates

SSB 5305 creates a nine-person committee to study whether the supply of aggregate in the state is sufficient to fulfill GMA comprehensive plan requirements and evaluate permit efficiencies and the regulation of aggregate and affiliated industries.

Ecology wetlands update

Wetlands best available science document – The Washington departments of Ecology and Fish and Wildlife will be distributing a draft of *Freshwater Wetlands in Washington State: Volume 1 – A Synthesis of the Science* for review in July.

This document, and a second (Volume 2) containing management options and recommendations, is being developed to assist local governments meet GMA requirements and provide information on wetland science and management. Work on Volume 2 will begin while Volume 1 is being reviewed.

To obtain a copy of the Volume 1 draft: (1) download it from Ecology's Web site or (2) request a CD or hard copy from Teri Granger at *tgra461@ecy.wa.gov*. If you would like more information, e-mail Granger or visit *www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/ bas_wetlands/index.html*.

Wetland rating system for Western and Eastern Washington – Ecology has revised the Washington State Wetland Rating System for Eastern Washington. A final draft will be available this summer. Revisions for the Western Washington rating system are underway and a final draft is expected by fall.

To get a copy of the latest draft, download three files from Ecology's Web site at *www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/ 0206019a.html*. Send comments to Tom Hruby at *thru461@ecy.wa.gov* or 360-407-7274.

Wetland policy and technical mitigation guidance – Ecology is updating its existing guidance documents on mitigation. The two documents are:

● *How Ecology Regulates Wetlands,* January 1997, Publication #97-112 *(www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/97112.html).* For information, call Andy McMillan at 360-407-7272 or e-mail *anmc461@ecy.wa.gov*.

● *Guidelines for Developing Freshwater Wetlands Mitigation Plans and Proposals,* March 1994, Publication #94-29 *(www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/pubs/ 94-029/94-029.html).*

Comments can be submitted to Dana Mock via at *dmoc41@ecy.wa.gov* or PO Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600.

To obtain copies of any of these publications, call at 360-407-7472 or e-mail *jewi461@ecy.wa.gov*.

It's your nickel, watch it work – Transportation improvements to begin

By Douglas B. MacDonald
Washington State Secretary of Transportation

The Legislature's recent approval of a nickel increase in the gas tax – the first since 1991 – is a terrific opportunity for Washington state. It signals a commitment to our shared future by offering a balanced plan that addresses

Airports and land use

By John Shambaugh
Senior Planner, Aviation Division, WSDOT

State law was amended in 1996 to require all local governments to protect general aviation airports from incompatible land uses through comprehensive planning and development regulations. The law requires formal consultation with the Washington State Transportation Aviation Division, airport owners, general aviation pilots, airport managers, and other aviation interests.

As the GMA Update deadline approaches, it's a good time to review and update, as necessary, provisions within comprehensive plans and development regulations to protect public use airports from adjacent incompatible development. Airports can be affected by height hazards and density or intensity of land uses up to one or more miles away, depending on the size of the airport.

The Aviation Division requests early coordination efforts with towns, cities, and counties to facilitate discussions on how to protect public use airports from incompatible uses over a diversity of geographic landscape, such as urban, rural, resource, and/or critical areas. Many strategies are available and the division would like to extend its help and technical assistance to local governments in their efforts to protect general aviation airports.

The Airport Land Use Compatibility Guidelines, example policies, model ordinances, and other resource materials may be requested from the division or downloaded from its Web site at *www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation.*

If you have questions about general aviation airport protection, call 360-651-6306.

highways, ferries, and public transportation. We call it the nickel package, but it also has other sources of funds that can be spent for non-highway projects.

The package raises $4.1 billion over ten years and over 80 percent of all the projects are fully funded from state sources. Another 10 percent are funded with state and partnership funding. This means that the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), with private construction firms, will build 94 safety improvement or congestion relief projects around the state. The remaining nine projects are receiving funds for engineering and environmental review, important first steps in project development.

At WSDOT, we know that it's your nickel. We say, watch it work. Work to improve safety, reduce congestion, and contribute to the economy. The package will create

construction jobs in the short term and enhance our ability to move the people and goods that contribute to our economic well being statewide.

Some projects people can see under construction right away include:

- Adding a truck-climbing lane on I-90 to reduce accidents from cars trying to pass trucks while ascending the pass.
- Improving the most dangerous intersection in the state, reducing rear end and left turn crashes on SR 500 at NE Gher Street in Vancouver.
- Widening I-5 north of Vancouver, to keep traffic moving.
- Widening I-90 in Spokane so people and goods get where they need to go.

For a complete list of Nickel Package project descriptions, cost, and schedule, visit *www.wsdot.wa.gov.*

Increasing focus on bicycle and pedestrian plans

In an effort to improve consistency with the bicycle and pedestrian priorities of local agencies, WSDOT is reviewing changes to the department's Design Manual.

The changes would direct designers to review local, county, and regional bicycle and pedestrian plans when determining necessary roadway widths, shoulder widths, and other bicycle and pedestrian design considerations. For example, if a state route is considered to be a significant bicycle/pedestrian route in the local, county, regional, or state plan, specific design standards will apply.

WSDOT's City/County Design Standards Committee, made up of local public works department representatives, is considering similar changes to the City and County Design Standards.

For details, contact Paula Reeves, WSDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, at 360-705-7258 or *reevesp@wsdot.wa.gov.*

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